

DVD & Blu-ray Reviews

The Beatles – Their Golden Age DVD (2012)

A flawed documentary examines the career of the Fab Four.



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The Beatles – Their Golden Age (2012)

Interviews with The Beatles and film clips from *A Hard Day's Night*, *Help!*, *The Magical Mystery Tour*, *Yellow Submarine* and *Let It Be*.

Studio: Wildwood Films/ MVD Visual MVD5397D [7/24/2012]

Producer/Narrator: Les Krantz

Video: 1.33:1, color, black & white

Audio: English PCM Stereo

All Regions

Length: 60 minutes

Rating: **1/2

Over forty years after the breakup of The Beatles, there continues to be a never-ending supply of supplemental material. After the release of the 3 CD and television documentary *Beatles Anthology*, even the three remaining legends of that group publicly acknowledged the totality of this project. What they didn't count on was the public's insatiable curiosity for any details of the most influential music group of the twentieth century.

In line with this thinking, MVD Entertainment has released a documentary about the career of The Beatles. *The Beatles – Their Golden Age* traces the development of the group from its genesis to its sudden demise. Utilizing black and white and color film, most of the footage chronicles the earlier years. At the outset, it must be mentioned that this unauthorized film has no actual Beatle music at all. This leaves a significant chasm in explaining a phenomenon without its greatest asset. There is ample coverage of *Beatlemania*, replete with stock footage of screaming, female fans, beginning in Europe and then the U.S. There are nostalgic interviews with the band members, which reiterate their carefree glib nature. An interview with newlyweds George Harrison and Patti Boyd has some charm. Occasionally, the viewer gets to see the Lennon wit, but too infrequently. Also, there is generous footage from Richard Lester's *A Hard Day's Night*, including rare film of the set. Another early highlight is a snippet from the documentary *The Beatles Come To Town*. Several chronological situations (for example, the transition from Pete Best to Ringo Starr) are unexplained.

Once the narrative shifts to post-1966 Beatles, the momentum feels rushed. For someone who does not know about this group, the motivation and creative turmoil that fueled this meteoric rise is never fully explained. However, a compelling shot of a record-burning KKK rally in Texas (reaction to the Lennon quote about Jesus) transcends the prosaic narrative. Unfortunately, the later stages of the documentary are not as interesting as the first part.

The black and white footage (which comprises most of the film) is very clear and not too grainy. The sound (especially in the interviews) is good. But *The Beatles – Their Golden Age* is flawed.

—Robbie Gerson



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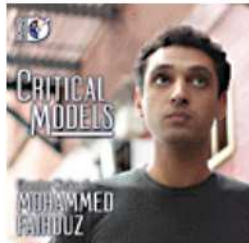
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